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ESSAYS AND POEMS

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Fannie May Barbee Hughs

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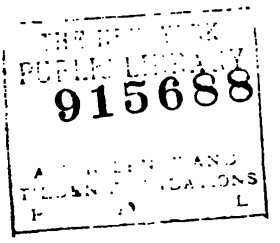

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DEDICATED
To the Moulders of Public Opinion

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INFLUENCE OF WAR ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POETRY

A popular and characteristic feature of every war is its literature—in poetry and song. Herder, the poet and theologian, teaches us that poetry is the expression of national life. If we follow the national history of the various countries we will find in each instance that a revolution called forth a grand outburst of patriotic song. "Rouget de Lisle," inspired by the opening of the French revolution, gave voice to the spirit-stirring "Marseillaise" hymn, which continues to stir the heart of France. Cromwell and his men went forth to battle singing hallelujahs! During the present conflict, England's soldiers march to the national hymn, "God Save the King."

In the Franco-Prussian war German soldiers went into battle singing "The Night Watch on the Rhine," a National hymn which owes its existence to struggle between France and Germany, written by Schneckenburger in 1840. The Scottish laddie goes forth to battle singing "Scots Wha Hae," to

a traditional air, the same as sung by Bruce's men at Bannockburn, while Ireland has the world-renowned melody and words, "Wearing of the Green." The struggle between Belgium and Holland gave to literature "La Brabauconne," by the strains of which all Belgium's patriotic spirit today is thrilled. What Southern heart has not been stirred by the singing of the "Bonnie Blue Flag," and gone wild at the strains of "Dixie!" Every American heart thrills at the strains of the "Star-Spangled Banner"—all sparks of flame from the fires of war. Among the noted poems of Russian literature, the most noted are the ballad's of Zhukooski, "The Poet in the Russian Camp," sung by the soldiers in the War of 1812, and in the present conflict her soldiers march to the dignified music and words, "God Save the Czar."

In the nineteenth century of literature, we find the great humanitarian movement, which had given rise to the French Revolution, manifesting itself in manifold ways. Poets and philosophers gave varied utterances to its spirit, delivering its message to the hearts of the populace. In the literary field the revolutionary spirit was overwhelmingly triumphant. When the British government was lavishing wealth and bending

its energies for the overthrow of Napoleon, the citizens of the northern capitol, Edinburgh, were still discussing the principles of the French Revolution. From this intellectual ferment came the new impulse of literature. With the new century came an outburst of freedom in the form of lyrical ballads and lays.

Byron in his "Ode to Napoleon," and "Night Before the Battle of Waterloo," Macaulay's "Song of the Huguenots;" Scott's "Irvy;" Thos. Campbell's "Battle of Hohenlinden;" Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade;" drew their inspiration from the great European wars, and gave to the world stirring ballads, immortalizing heroic deeds that time cannot dim.

In France critics tell us that, during the Eighteenth Century, the soul seemed to have left the body of poetry, and so far as literature was concerned, she was living on husks. The decadence of the century was due to two causes, the growth of philosophic materialism and sham idealism; but as the Revolution was felt all over Europe, so also, was the voice of Rousseau, the apostle of sentimentalism; "sentimentalism aroused and kindled by the lightning from belligerent France." Another voice heard in the new order of

things was that of Chateaubrand, but in the garden of poetry, no theme has resulted in more poetic sentiment than the life of Joan of Arc.

The literature of Germany in the middle and at the close of the Eighteenth Century showed much unrest, due to the political division of the Fatherland into petty states. Through the lyric poet, Klopstock, Germany, after having passed through terrible trials and bloody wars, became united. It was he who directed attention to the ancient hero, Arminius, who defeated the Roman legions in the Teutoberger forests, and by his poetic genius the populace was inspired, and thus, once again, Arminius became the German hero, and the symbol of united Germany. But it was the national humiliation, the battle of Jena, which gave Prussia to Napoleon, and the second battle at Friedland, when the King was compelled to give up a good part of his territory, which aroused the national spirit, and the War of Liberation, in which the French were driven out, that called forth an outburst of patriotic songs. Lutzen's volunteer corps, to which Koener, the youthful German martyr, belonged, became especially terrible to the enemy by the wild national melodies around camp fires. These have

been collected and are known as the "Lyre and Sword," and could not have been written in any other environment than that of war. In the "Songs of Fatherlandt," Arndt thanks God for making iron, that there may be weapons for free men.

Regret for what was irretrievably lost and vain hopes for its restoration unsealed the mouths of the poets of the unhappy kingdom of Poland, we are told by those chroniclers of "Six Thousand Years of History." In the poem, "Konrad Wallenrod," Mickienwiez describes with a thrill the battles of the Teutonic Knights with the heathen Lithuanians in the Fifteenth Century, but criticis declare it was aimed at the wars of the Poles and Russians. Julius Slorvacki in "Anhelli" expresses allegorically the sufferings of his native land. There is more of the funeral dirge, with its lamentations, than is to be found in most martial poems. It is, however, not alone to the writers of the Nineteenth Century, that we look to see the great influences and inspiration that war has cast over the poetic spirit, but, as we turn the leaves of time we find throughout every age and clime its manifestation in the literature of its people; memorials which have survived the assault of time, the tooth of decay, un-

veiling the hidden past; the incarnation of all the heroic deeds that Time has crowned with immortality in poetic melody. In the "Song of Deborah," we find the martial spirit of the age expressed. It is the "Ode of Victory," which paints with true colors the stirring daily events of the age of Judges. In a flash, time and space are annihilated. We raptly harken to the blind poet as he chants the wondrous story of Troy. We list with bated breath as he tells the tales of his fierce combat and heroic deeds in poetic meter, and as he sings his immortal song we see the warring hosts of Hellas and Troy leap into being. The battle din is in our ears; we see the madly rushing chariots, the deadly struggle for the gate, the entrance of the wooden horse, and through the potency of this Latin poet's genius we stand on Ilium's plain, infused with the same spirit as that which inspired the genius, and as the darkness falls, lo! we see suddenly the gleam of many camp fires; truly the precious life-blood of a master mind; the consecration and a poet's dream, brought into life through the influence of combat.

Rowing up the stream of Time, we find the earliest literature of a people is almost always poetry; oral tradition preserves the

tale, and the story teller is the hero of the fireside and camp fire. From the Tales Caedmus and Theseus the poets of Republican Era; Lucius, Catullus; poets of the Augustan, or Golden Age of Literature, to those of our own time, we see and feel the influence of the martial spirit of their metrical tales, and an intensity of dramatic vision portrayed, and we conclude that in a belligerant age and environment poetry blossoms most luxuriantly. Through its influence, the imagination, the true beauty of poetry is quickened and the influence of conflict is felt in its artistic development. As the hosts went forth from the dreary plains of Asia their poetic imagination was rejuvenated and the literature of the world thereby enriched.

We find by inquiry and analysis that the belligerent state of nations and people has been requisite for the production of some of the world's greatest epic poems. The "Illiad," as heretofore mentioned, the "Aeneid," owe their existence to the influence of war upon the mind of their authors, as do some of the world's greatest tragic poems.

Perhaps no war of recent years has more prolifically inspired the poetic instinct than that of the Civil War, written during a fam-

ily quarrel, when feeling was intense and the fight hot and fast. Many of them are gems that the Southern people will take care to preserve to posterity. If it be true that poetry is in its decadence, due to the lack of inspiration and motive, may we not expect from the war cries of Europe some spirit to soar aloft, and depict in metrical verse an epic poem, for there will be heroes of rank and file; heroes of the air, of charges, and counter charges. We shall see the plummet sunk into human emotions; see the courage of people uplifting them above the fear of death and the sacrifices only such as war can produce. Have we listened in vain for the Swan Song of Militarism?

TRACES OF POWER OF MUSIC IN LITERATURE

Music suggests more than it displays, stimulates the imagination, appropriates the phenomena of sound to the purpose of poetry, and has a province wholly distinct from other arts. Great has been its power; from the very earliest epoch of the world down through countless ages the charms of melody have held sway. In the stillest nights there are sometimes musical sounds which are literally audible, for which we cannot account. Superstition has dealt seriously with them, and framed from them mythology. The sighing of the wind has caused a feeling of solitude and loneliness to weigh upon travelers, which legend declares is "panic fear," and mythology recounts many musical contests between nymphs, naiads and gods. There is music in all nature, and these mysterious voices have inspired the most beautiful gems of literature and works of art. Celtic poetry is full of them; Teutonic folklore is full of myths; every glade in Germany has its spirit founded on mysterious voices,

which are the corner stones for musical life of these people today, which were the natural efforts of the people to find expression of their feelings. In all literature there are discernible traces of music's power. Hamlin, the piper, magically cleared the town of rats. In "Alexander's Feast," by Dryden, old Timortheus strikes his lyre and by music's power moves the hero from mood to mood. He sings of Jove and Alexander and by the power of suggestion himself

"Assumes the God
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres"

Tennyson's "May Queen" hears Celestial music and understands its summons. Wagoner said: "Before I start to fashion a verse I am filled with the musical perfume of my creation." Shakespeare in many of his immortal dramas makes his characters attest the influence from which the power of music has woven its spell and declares even Pope, who was fit only for stratagem and spoils, dedicated an ode to St. Cecilia, and so on ad infinitum.

Coming down the ages, music has played a prominent part in its influence on every nation. The latest spark finds vent in song, which in turn inspires to action, and no coun-

try can afford to ignore the patriotic force capable of being brought into play by its power. The Egyptians studied it on scientific principles; it was regarded as an important science and diligently studied by the priests. According to Strabo the children were taught songs appointed by law and certain kinds of music established by the government. Plato, who was well acquainted with the usages of the Egyptians, says they considered music of the greatest consequence from its beneficial influence upon the youth, and declares music is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the innermost soul, on which they mightily fasten, importing grace and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful.

Athenais says both Greeks and barbarians were taught music by refugees from Egypt. They, too, were subject to its influence and employed it at religious ceremonials and to accompany military evolutions. It has been considered an essential in the entertainment of the Jews as of the Greeks. The modern Jewish synagogue has preserved in its ceremonials the use of the shofar, which in early days of Israel was used for military purposes and played an important part in the

imposing demonstrations made before the walls of Jericho, and in nineteen passages from the prophets it symbolizes war. From the Talmud we learn the use of the shofar as a note of alarm of war was transferred to other seasons of danger and distress. David delighted in music and employed a great number of Levites to sing and play at religious festivals, Solomon employed a hundred and twenty priests to sound with trumpets at the dedication of the temple. Great has been the power of the psalms of David; they have resounded in the courts of the mighty; they have floated in the lofty and solemn spaces of the temple; they have been sung with glory in the halls of Zion and with sorrow by the streams of Babylon.

Differences in nations, ages and places have modified musical expressions, but have not been able to eliminate its power, but it was with the beginning of the Christian era its influence began to be most felt; then it was that it became the vehicle for increasing the range of spiritual visions. Metrical verses, or sacred subjects, in the language of the people were composed by Luther and adapted to ancient church melodies. The placing of the choral song of the church within the lips of the people had a great religious and moral

influence. Among the forms of musical art, the oratorio appeals most to the deepest and most cherished human interests, and in it musical enjoyment seems to minister to a higher end; it is the music of the people. It is only of recent times that the combination of vocal and instrumental music has been brought to such perfection, and perhaps it is in the rendering of "The Messiah," Handel's great and sublime musical composition, a wondrous paean in praise of the Redeemer, more than any other one musical influence that the thoughts of the spellbound listener are carried near, indeed, to the joyous psalmody of Heaven. So we must conclude that whether it was the pipings of Pan; the sweet discourse on the tortoise lyre of Apollo; Orpheus, Hermes, Jubal, on his newly invented instrument, or David on his harp, music has largely contributed to the recreation of mankind; stimulated the mind to greater endeavor, and all down the ages, whether in paeans of triumphant jubilation for victory, in strophes of poetic rhapsody and exultation, or in dirges or lamentations and griefs, it is the outlet for pent up emotions and the influence which puts us in tune with the Infinite.

CRUCIS FIGURA—THE SYMBOL OF THE CROSS

No symbol, since the advent of Christianity has played a more important part in history, art and legend, than the cross, for as an instrument of crucifixion it has been associated directly with Christ's death, and wherever seen bears reference to that fundamental fact of Christian history. It was adopted as the symbol of Christians of the later part of the second century after the birth of Christ and by the third century they had begun to look upon the cross as a protection from evil spirits. It was adopted as the standard by many a leader and supposed to be endowed with mystic power by those who, with fanatical zeal, followed "via crusis." It inspired that great military expedition undertaken by the Christian nations of Europe, the Crusade, so named from the cross worn as a badge by those undertaking the pilgrimage, who with one voice cried, "Dieu le Volt." It set in motion movements that stirred to the profoundest depths all Europe for more than two centuries when

all Christian Europe rang with the cry, "He who will not take up the cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me," changed the flood-tide of history, and carried Christianity to the utmost ends of the earth, and today, Easter, many are kneeling reverentially in churches, cathedrals and along the highways in Catholic lands before the cross, that sign of love eternal and divine, which has inspired through centuries lofty aims and high ideals in history, art, legend and poetry. With the conquest of Christianity the emblem became prized by others than ecclesiastics and Christians. It soon became emblazoned on shields of heraldry; added dignity to crowns and scepters; became the ensign of fraternal organizations, ornamented banners, and today is the insignia of peace borne by the Red Cross society.

* * *

Christianity in all lands has dealt in her own fashion with the crucis figura. The cross is still surrounded by mysticism, as well as tradition, and by many endowed with miraculous attributes, as is seen at the various shrines of Mexico and the old world during Lent.

In no land does the influence of the cross so completely fill the minds of Jesus's follow-

ers, as in the land of Latin passion, Mexico. Here it rears itself in most unexpected places, often commemorating some memorable incident on the spot, but more frequently as the symbol of the Passion, endeavoring to impress upon the minds of the wayfarers the tragedy of Golgotha.

In England and Ireland many crosses, early erected, both eminently curious and interesting, still exist. Of the nine Eleanor crosses, designed to mark the places where the funeral procession of the first Edward's consort rested, there are two that the ravages of time and the hand of the spoiler have not demolished. These beautiful and justly celebrated crosses are, of course, classed under the head of monumental crosses. These are in a distinct class erected with a view of sepulchral commemoration, which gradually became general after the Eleventh century in God's Acre throughout England. The history of these in themselves furnishes most interesting reading. The evolution from an elongated shaft to one of monumental beauty was the accomplishment of not one sculptor, but of many through the ages.

* * *

In Christian architecture the sign of the cross has exercised a wide influence. The plan of the cathedrals of France, as well as Italy, truly the glories of those centuries, rich in their sculptured decorations, where the chant of the Te Deum has been heard for centuries, followed the cruciform type, which have given to modern art some of the noblest aspirations. The ground on which many of them now stand was excavated in a cruciform, and as the walls reared their magnificent proportions they carried with them the sacred sign. One of the noblest of these is St. John Lateran at Rome. The cathedral, the Holy Metropolitan church of Mexico, with its arched and vaulted roofs, massive altars and intricate carvings, is another example of architectural beauty, the interior of which is in the form of a Latin cross.

In the year 481 crosses were introduced into churches. Crosses of endless varieties surmounted the loftiest parts of cathedrals and churches from the earliest times, and churches the world over today, of less pretentious means, have their summits crowned with the crucifix, emblematic of Christ's death. A colossal crucifix, which glittered in the age of the crusader, still gleams today

above the marvelous structure of St. Marks at Venice.

Of the legends of the Crucis figura one of the most noted is the "Invention of the Cross," which is commemorated by all good Catholics, May third. Another is that of the great shining cross seen in the heavens by Constantine bearing the inscription, "In hoc signo vinces," and one which has had a most potent influence over the subsequent annals of history. The story of the first is to the effect that the Empress Helena, when visiting the scenes hallowed by the Saviour's sufferings, was guided to the spot by an aged Jew. Excavation revealed three crosses, and the title placed by Pilate's command. A miracle, that of power of instantaneous healing by touch of one of the crosses, was held to be conclusive proof of its identity. A church was built on the site of the "Invention," and the greater part of the cross here buried, and a portion taken by her and sent to Constantine in Rome, where a church was built for the sacred relic. A festival was established to commemorate its discovery and pilgrimages were made to see it. The story of the flaming cross as seen in the firmament by Constantine at noonday and the vision when he heard the famous motto,

"By this conquer," is familiar to every reader of history, an event which has demanded the attention of posterity, for by obedience to the command of heaven he won the victory at Milvian bridge, and became a convert to Christianity, a fact which has highly colored historical events.

* * *

After a two hours' journey by rail from Mexico's greatest city, Mexico City, the traveler arrives at the sacred mountain, Amecameca, where he finds the people stranger and simpler than the peasantry of Europe, and the sacred mountain as much to them as Calvary is to those of the Old World. Legend declares that in 1547 a large wooden cross was sent from Rome to the shrine of the Virgin of Gaudalupe. At Vera Cruz it landed and, as was the custom, was carried overland on the back of a burro. The lay brother in charge lost his way, and the burro, after winding its way through the woods, came to the cave in which had lived the pious Fra Martin, and refused to go further. The bishop declared that this was a sign from the Virgin that the cross was built to shelter it. Every year during Lent thousands of pilgrims climb on their knees to this sacred shrine, and the Amecameca is said to be very

much like Loudres, and, with its pilgrimage of sorrow and suffering, appeals to the imagination, only awaiting the pen of a Zola to immortalize its shrine.

CULT OF THE SHORT STORY: ITS MASTERS

The short story is more obscure in its origin than the Nile, and in its termination than the Niger. Tales, novels and romances are the principal forms of fiction, and are closely related. William D. Howells says: "Fiction had no knowable beginning, and will have no knowable ending." The word story is commonly used as synonymous with tale. Properly speaking, however, the term is applied to any form of narrative of past events, real or fictitious. It may be written in prose or verse.

It is true of all national literature that it took its rise in verse instead of prose, and while the poet is an emperor in his own right, the story is a potentate in the realm of fancy.

To judge the power and beauty of the art of the short story one must not view it at random, but rather mark its obscure origin and trace its growth from a mountain rivulet to an imposing stream, pausing to notice the different branches of literature which

have contributed toward making it an independent art and the environment of all ages with which it has struggled. Truly, we will, in examining its structure, be impressed with its qualities as a reflector, and by looking into this mirror see the gradual transition of thoughts and speech and be impressed with the knowledge that the cult of the short story, though a newly coined word in our English dictionary, is as old as the world itself, taken from the Latin word cultus, meaning cultivation.

"It is not difficult," says Hume, "to trace the process by which old songs were transmitted into the form which they now wear."

Among the most fascinating studies of recent growth is that which reveals to us the customs and beliefs of the early Aryan peoples, while their ancestors were yet living together as a single household, perhaps in Asia. Upon comparing the myths, legends, ballads and nursery tales of the different Aryan peoples, we discover the curious fact that under various disguises they are the same. "Jack the Giant Killer," with his "seven-league boots," is identical with the "Greek Hermes," with his "winged sandals," William Tell, with his unerring aim, is the Greek anchor god; Apollo, with his twanging

bow and many of our nursery tales are identified with those which amused the Hindu children.

* * *

By means of the Rosetta stone we have found the key to Egyptian writings, opening the vast libraries of learning, among which was found the familiar tale of "Cinderella and the Glass Slipper," and a story said to have been written especially for the little son of Rameses II. "Chaldea stands forth," says Rawlinson, "as the great parent and inventress of Asiatic civilization." By its study we know the classical nations, whose inheritors we are, to have received from Oriental nations through these two sources, Egypt and Chaldea, by way of Phoenicia and Asia Minor, many so-called heroic and nature myths. Many Greek heroes and heroines were prototypes of those of Chaldean stories.

The link that united the culture of Egypt and Babylon with that of Lydda was the Hittite empire; even the speculations of Ionian sages were tinged by the philosophy of Egypt. The islands of Greece, strewn with seeming carelessness through the Aegean Sea, Meyers thinks, were stepping stones, which blended the life and literature of the

opposite shores. Its scenery inspired many of the most striking passages of her poets. Here, in the shadowy past, every tribe, district, city and village preserved traditions of their heroes' exploits, commemorated in song and story. Many became the revered heroes of the whole Greek race. Among the tales of adventure, which are now classed as popular children's stories were "The Seven Against Thebes," "The Argonautic Expedition," and "The Siege of Troy." The legend of Thebes branches into a hundred tales from which many of the greatest productions of the Greek tragic poets drew their inspiration.

After the Roman conquest of Greece literary activity shifted from Alexandria to Rome, and we now have from 147 B. C. to 527 A. D. what is known as the Graeco-Roman period. This hasty glance at the beginning of civilization only serves to give us some little idea of what recent civilization owes to the people of the Euphrates valley, and what the short story was in its incipiency. We shall now proceed to trace the course of the culture of the short story through all ages and watch its rising tide as it receives fresh contribution until it rises into a wide and deep stream, recognized as an independent art.

"The early history of Rome," says Macaulay, "is far more poetical than anything else in Latin literature." In Livy's "Lays of Ancient Rome," the stories retain much of their genuine character: the poetry shines in spite of him, and we concur with Emerson, "Language is fossil poetry." As the limestone of the continent consists of infinite masses of shells of animalcules, so language is made up of images, and their secondary uses have long ceased to remind us of their poetic origin. The early Latin literature abounded in metrical tales, such as have been found in every country where there is much intelligence and little writing. All human beings not entirely savage yearn for information of the past times, and hence in Rome as in many other countries the kernel of the tale from which has been evolved the short story of modern times was immortalized through the pleasure that narration gave rather than any desire on the part of the inventor to leave his footprints on the sands of time. Such is the origin of ballads, which have sprung up and flourished in every nation at some point in their history. Tacitus tells us they were the only memorials of the past. The bare acts of the Gauls were commemorated by

verses of the bards. Minstrelsy retained its influence over both Teutonic and Celtic races for many ages. In rhyme the vengeance exacted by the spouse Attila for the murder of Siegfried was celebrated. The exploits of Athelstane were commemorated by the Anglo-Saxons, and those of Canute by the Danes, in rude verse. In Scandinavia the scalds and bards transmuted orally the legends of the northern races. The Welsh harpers preserved through ages a faint and doubtful memory of King Arthur. These ghosts, like ghosts of Shakespeare's drama, can not be ignored; they explain much of the subsequent developments of the story; they are the keys which unlock the mints of literature, and prove that a man who can invent, or embellish, an interesting story and put it into form which others can easily retain, has from time immemorial been hailed as a conquering hero.

* * *

To minstrelsy the preservation of the ballad and short story is more indebted for its permanent place in literature than any other influence. Wandering from village to village, they not only collected the wild tales of adventure afloat, but embellished them. They undoubtedly had resource to the inexhaust-

ible store of poetical images of Homer, who himself was a wandering minstrel.

* * *

Just as the Romans Romanized the people, so did the Saracens Saracenize the people subjugated to them. They were a nation of free-booters, a nomadic tribe, dwellers in tents.

In their peregrinations they became in-interpreters of human nature, a profound requisite to the art of story-telling. They merged easily into the distinguished story-tellers and have left on the tablets of time an influence on the composition of the short-story unequalled. Cody says, "No branch of literature as the short-story, had so democratic origin, as fiction, many originating in taverns and bar rooms." In the tales of oriental splendor in Arabian Nights we see the picture of the common people and the wild fancy takes us out of ourselves, which is a perilous charm—one which was at a later date to be recognized as an essential component part by the father of American literature, and to be skillfully used by him in his modern Arabian Nights story, "Rip Van Winkle."

* * *

History says, between the tenth and fourteenth centuries the native tongues of Europe found voice, and formed literatures of their own, and begun to blossom in song and story. In Spain the epic-poem of the Cid formed the beginning of literature; in South France the Troubadours fill the land with the melody of their love songs; in the north of France the Trouveres recite the stirring romances of Charlemagne; in Germany the harsh strains of the Nibelungen-lied are followed by the softer notes of the Minnesingers; in Italy, Dante sings his "Divine Comedy"; in England Chaucer writes his "Canterbury Tales," all echoes of the Iliad and Odyssey.

"Knowledge advances; manners change; great foreign models of composition are studied and imitated." Thus is ushered in the Italian Renaissance, that passionate outgoing towards the ancient world. Here the Italian scholars drank at the fountain head of the world's literature. The fictitious narrative is the natural outgrowth of the epic poem. The transition was slow and developed after the faith in heroic and mythological legends was shaken. From the amplifications of old traditions, to the invention of new ones known to be false, was but a

slight step. These stories were no longer chanted, but were narrated.

* * *

As we draw nearer and nearer to the confines of the authentic modern tale, having noticed the influence of wars, travel, environment; studied the legends, chronicles, and noticed the compositions of prehistoric times and their part in the subconscious development of the story, there remains to examine the other influences of a later day which have blended in the constructive art of short story writing. We are first to consider what the short story owes to the essay and the fable; humorous and pathetic sentiment; realism and romanticism, as literary methods, and later on to consider plot construction, strength in contrast and the requisite of a well balanced story.

* * *

Boccaccio's "Decameron," historians of literature agree, is the foundation of the modern short story. Boccaccio, the second of the humorists, received his inspiration, according to legend, at the tomb of Virgil in Naples. Despairing of attaining the highest eminence in poetry, he entered another department of literature, rendered famous by the Trouveres, whom he imitated in romantic

fiction. He with rapidity produced the celebrated "Decameron," consisting of a hundred tales, a work which has been more plagiarized than any other, and a work on which critics agree is based the cult of the modern short story. For the first time woman holds the interest of the reader. They contain every variety of incident, and character, pathetic, humorous, virtuous and gross. It is said that few of them were original. Many of them were collected from the common tales of the Italians and were too gross to repeat; many were taken from the Trouveres and some are of remote Greek origin, all remodeled. It is said he got up his stories with all the art he could master and went a long way to hear a good one. Among the number, "Patient Griselda,," critics pronounce the most artistic. As it is to be the base of the modern short story, let us pause to consider its structure. It is a simple tale of narrative character, with no color or atmosphere; a story of chaste simplicity. It flows quietly and unruffled, a style peculiar to Boccaccio.

Closely following Boccaccio we hail "The Morning Star" of English literature, Geoffrey Chaucer. While traveling in Italy he made the acquaintance of Petrarch and Boc-

caccio. Stimulated by the renown which the "Decameron" had bestowed on Boccaccio he conceived a plan of producing a similar work in his own language, the work on which his fame rests, "Canterbury Tales."

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Shaw declared that "the great writers of the Elizabethan age were the natural products of the newly awakened England of that day." Bacon was of that age and was among the first to turn his attention to the new form of writing, the essay, which from a small beginning was to become a most important branch of literature and which was later to become a brief dissertation written in light and pleasing style, known as prose style, having as its exponents Addison, Steele, Swift, Goldsmith, Johnson and Lamb, who were all more or less short story writers. Addison's story of "Sir Roger De Coverly," published in the Spectator; Swift's "Gulliver's Travels," and Daniel Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe" may be especially mentioned. We mention this class of writings for, blended with the metrical ballad, it created a new style of expression, of which Washington Irving is the happiest delineator. Until his era the story was without description, ejaculation or metaphor. Facts were

stated without embellishment. The power of fiction in expanding not only absorbed the best in the essay, but much that belonged to poetry. From now on we will notice that as fiction grows, poetry diminishes. It is the language with which the plot is clothed; the words flow in melodious rhythm, the light pleasing phantasies at every turn, and we note the touch of the essayist.

The fable, like the tale, contains a short but real narrative, but seeks to inculcate some moral maxim, social duty or political truth. "The fable," says Muller, "originated in Greece." It, like the metrical ballad was handed down for generations orally, and later brought into circulation by the printing press.

Hawthorne took up the fable and is said to have made it, more than any other story writer, the keynote to all he wrote.

* * *

As the modern love story originated in the tales of the Decameron, the modern romance grew out of the Oriental tales of the "Arabian Nights," a model closely followed by Irving. We have said that modern fiction was a child of the union of the tales of Decameron and of those of the "Arabian Nights," yet subsequent events have proven

beyond dispute that as an independent art the short story made little progress until Poe and Hawthorne worked with it. In London it was not until Kipling appeared in the arena that the publishing of short stories became profitable. It is said that half a century past, writers of short stories had no conscious art, but today it is different. Many universities have established courses in short story writing, and as much care is bestowed upon the teaching of this branch as any other.

"The first essential," says Cody, "is to have a striking idea, situation or trait of character, and only one. The length of the story must be as long as the idea, no longer." A matter of greatest importance to the short story writer is first to collect material; in other words, make a business of getting material. It has been suggested that the best place to look for this material is in the files of the daily papers. Curious things happening in life are being recorded daily. After having secured your material, the next step is to develop a central idea, and to be able to do so one must have wonderful creative imagination. The divine, the immortal element of a story is the moral that it teaches, as in the fable, yet one must feel it

rather than read it in so many words; it must shine through the windows of our composition. Many writers have likened it to the soul as it is the element that gives lasting fame.

Another essential taught by the school of the short story is the setting, that the detail and event must be developed in the mind before an artistic setting can be given. These and many other ideas are developed by schools, which have attempted to prove that the short story, like any branch of art, can be successfully taught.

* * *

Romance developed by George Sand, Hugo and Dumas, was first, telling in simple form the poetical romance of chivalry; later, there were tales of adventure, of rogues and vagabonds. The transmutation of the tale became completed when Gustav Thaubat startled France with his realistic creation, "Madame Bovary." Each has left a potent influence upon the writings of today; each cry "il girdo." Beyond dispute the realist adopted and perfected the short story. Balzac is the accepted type of the realist. Taine has said, that "his works are the greatest storehouse of documents of human nature." His "Comedie Humain" is in reality a series

of life. "The Mysterious Mansion" is the best known of these short stories.

Dickens has revealed to us the matchless power in pathetic and humorous sentiment. In his "Christmas Carol" he gives a striking portrayal of the humorous and pathetic in human nature, showing a strength in contrast rarely found in other writers' works. His stories have been more laughed and wept over than anything else we find in literature.

Next let us glance at the progress in the special art of construction. Here, we discover Poe to be beyond doubt the greatest constructive and inventive genius, and since he constructed his own plot, and showed the world how it could be done in his "Philosophy of Composition," the world has accepted him as the father of the modern short story. Particularly is this the case with the detective story, which arose in France from a hint taken from some of Poe's work. We may say without fear of contradiction that in pre-Poe and Hawthorne days authors employed the tale as a by-product of the mind; since then it has served to express some of the great conceptions of genius. Verily, it was Irving, Hawthorne and Poe who began the cult of the story of today. It was adapted to the needs of the times and tastes of the people.

No wonder the cult reached perfection in America, for the Americans are by nature story tellers. The pioneer lives of our forefathers furnished material of a fanciful and poetic nature, ranging from somber to humorous. These national characteristics were recognized by these men of genius and they have wrought from tales and legends gathered from a people predisposed to beliefs in elfs and goblins.

In France the cult of the short story was more employed and reached a higher point of excellence with Merimee, Maupassant, the student of Flaubert and Gautier, whose realism, local color, thrilling tragedy and artistic finish has placed him among the world's greatest masters.

* * *

The editor of Harper's magazine, discussing the relative merits of different nationalities, thinks the French come first and the Americans second. The London Times says: "It will be hard to find four writers of short stories of the Victorian era who would equal Hawthorne, Poe, Bret Harte and Henry James." Bliss Perry, former editor of the Atlantic Monthly, thinks Rudyard Kipling the most gifted story writer. Many critics think Thackeray a short story writer gone

wrong, and Mr. Henley considers "The Princess' Tragedy," a chapter in "Barry Lyndon," one of the very best short stories. Another country, which may justly lay claim to having excelled in the artistic completion of the short story, is Russia, the home of Turgenief and Tolstoi. Sherwin Cody selects for the practical purpose of illustrating the evolution of the art of short story writing the following stories: "Patient Griselda," "Rip Van Winkle," "A Passion in the Desert," "The Gold Bug," "A Christmas Carol," "A Child's Dream of a Star," "A Princess' Tragedy," "The Great Stone Face," "The String," "The Necklace," "The Man Who Would Be King," and "On the Stairs." There are few who will agree in every instance in the choice, as each has his fireside friend, independent of those whom greater critics have selected. Memory is the key that in the hours of revelry opens the doors of reminiscence, and as the twilight shadows gather and the evening taper is lighted, in the solemn hush of eventide, ghost after ghost glides softly to my study door, knocking for admission. One after another has been admitted, and my hospitality is taxed to its utmost capacity. There is no longer room for my unbidden guests, yet each is as welcome as the flowers in May.

Each, as I look and recognize it, through the realm of fiction has carried my thoughts back to the storied past, or lifted the veil of the mystic future. It is a cosmopolitan gathering. There is a company of authors from France, Germany, Russia and America. Zola, Merimee, Daudet, Stevenson, Maupassant, Sardou, Balzac, Dickens, Bret Harte, Coppee, Hawthorne, Dumas, Barrie, Besant, all masters of adventure and romance. Then there is another group who claim recognition, and whom you cannot close the door upon as masters of the modern cult of the tale and writers of ghost stories—Gautier, Kipling, Wilkie Collins, Hugh Conway, Walter Scott, Lord Lytton and Couch—writers of weird fantasy; tales that evenly and consistently uphold the best traditions of the art of short story writing. Who does not love to recall the fairy tales read in childhood, and who would fail to accord these masters a cordial reception? There is Swift with his hero, "Gulliver," Defoe with "Robinson Crusoe," Grimes and his "Household Faires," and Hans Christian Anderson, the prince of story writers. There are Hawthorne, Poe, Irving, Cooper, Bret Harte, Stockton, Mark Twain and W. D. Howells, near and dear friends. Each has gathered unto himself a wealth of

affection and cannot be banished from one's panoramic company of illustrious guests.

THE SONG OF HATE

Stitch, stitch, stitch, 'tis not the Song of the Shirt, but the Song of Hate, that grows in the hearts of all womankind as her nimble fingers fly. Hate for the commercial greed and military power, which, if overcome, must be paid for with tears from women's eyes. Tears for the sacrifice of the lives of their sons.

Knit, knit, knit until eyes grow dim with unshed tears. While needles fly, there escapes many a weary sigh, and with every stitch a gem is knitted within the garment she weaves for the boys in far-away France, or on battle-ships on foreign waters. Many sets of helmets, sweaters and scarfs must be made before the battle is begun, and many hearts must break before victory is won.

Lives must be sacrificed on the War-God's altar, and women must pay the price that Democracy may be proclaimed and the brotherhood of man attained.

Woman's part is but a mite, yet she sits and knits far in the night! It is the part that all women must pay, in sacrifices, great and

small, day by day. The army must be fed, and above all, bullets moulded; and it is her daily task to wear an inscrutable mask. To sit and knit, and knit; or with nimble fingers the bandage roll to staunch the flow from wounded France.

But, the battle must be won at any cost, it matters not how many lives are lost; or hearts of women break, the Kaiser must be outdone, for the Cause of Democracy is at stake. As through her fingers the bandage slips, the Song of Hate falls from her cold lips.

She hears throughout the world the tocsin call: To arms! To arms! Defend the sacred rights of humanity. Beware of the Barbarians! They may yet plant their feet on your native soil, and the horrors of Belgium repeat. To arms! To arms! Every native son, yours the valiant course to run, that Democracy's Eagle may spread her wings and enfold the children of the whole world beneath a banner that stands for the freedom of all mankind. Freedom from the military school—freedom from the cursed power of one-man rule.

The Republic of France is torn and bleeding within, yet, with undaunted spirit, she strives to win. For every foot of progress

made, on East and West the lives of men must be paid. We can not, dare not, ask a Premature Peace. We must demand Absolute Release. We must urge with all the vigor of our soul, unity of purpose and sacrifice, that on History's scroll may be written in letters of red, how the American lad fell, with other heroes, dead, that the Cause of Right might win.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

There is not a civilized country under the sun that does not celebrate Christmas Day with festivities; many and greatly varied are the peculiar customs, imitating as they do, "the wicked old pagans." If we delve into history we find that many of the prettiest of our observances ante-date the birth of Christ. In fact, even the day, December twenty-fifth, has been questioned as the date of the Nativity, the argument being largely based on the fact that this was the rainy season in Judea, and that it was hardly likely that flocks and shepherds would be in the fields of Bethlehem.

Christians, however, from the beginning laid more stress on keeping it in memory of Jesus Christ in the spirit and not in the exact date. In the fourth century Pope Julius had St. Cyril make investigations, and while it was impossible to determine upon the exact date, December twenty-fifth was agreed upon as being as near as possible to ascertain. In the fifth century historians tell us that the day began to be largely ob-

served, due probably from a desire to supplant the heathen festival saturnalia and the influence of tradition. It was, however, not until the sixth century that the custom of observing this day became universal but from this date we have celebrated with festivities of various kinds until at the present time the fear has been expressed that we are about to lose sight of the reason for such observance in our eagerness for expensive gifts, one to the other.

* * *

No locality in the world's history has exerted such an influence over mankind as that of Bethlehem; here is built the holiest shrine of the world, the Church of the Nativity, belonging to Latins, Greeks and Armenians, and which at Christmastide is the Mecca of hordes of fanatics, who style themselves Christians, and others of pious mien. To quote a world-renowned traveler:

"To this spot, which is the cradle of Christendom, flock pilgrims from lands far distant, to participate in the impressive festival. On Christmas eve, thousands, headed by the dignitaries of the Roman Catholic church, Greek and Oriental churches, leave Jerusalem for the scene of the wonderful nativity. Turkish soldiers guard the en-

trance to the Church of the Nativity, and as soon as the doors are ordered open the surging crowds enter to find it illuminated with wax candles and olive oil burning in lamps of gold and silver. The service is choristal until twelve strokes from the clock sounds the hour of Nativity, then follows perfect silence. The atmosphere is laden with incense, and as the seventh candle on the altar is lighted, a crimson curtain is drawn aside, revealing the image of the infant Christ. The bells peal forth joyfully announcing the birth of the Saviour. Priests and choristers join in singing 'Gloria in Excelsis,' closing wth a procession to the manger, in a grotto."

In old England it is the custom on Christmas eve, after the devotional service is over, to throw on the hearth the yule log, and the revels begin. The houses and churches are bedecked with evergreens, special stress being placed on the use of mistletoe. The yule log is undoubtedly a relic of paganism, and was cut from the oak. It was thought in early times that fire could only be secured by rubbing two pieces of wood together. It was therefore lighted from one year to the other from the same fire in

honor of the Sun-God; later it was to typify the light eternal.

In Scandinavia, said to rank first in observation of Christmas, there is a quaint custom of placing all the shoes of the family in a row, signifying the wish that the house may remain harmonious.

In Russia, at the setting of the sun on Christmas eve, the old and young of the poorer classes visit the homes of the wealthy, singing Christmas carols, for alms. The revel of the night consists in masquerading when animals are impersonated, because Christ was born in a manger.

There are many picturesque ways in which the season is celebrated in different countries, but none are of more ancient origin than those of Servia, whose ancient rites of sun worship have been turned into the worship of the new "Son of righteousness." Holland with her hunt for hidden gifts; the Danish "Juli-nissen;" the noisy torch-lighted Befan Fair in Rome; and many others hold charm of Christmas mystery, and give us an idea of how the world, throughout the ages, has observed the festival. To Germany belongs originally the Christmas tree custom. History tells us

that Mary, Queen of Scots, was the first English child to have a Christmas tree.

But what to the small child is undoubtedly of more interest, is Kris Kringle; what little heart does not go "pit-a-pat" at the mention of Santa Claus, and faces become illuminated with the thought of his sleigh laden with Christmas gifts for the good little girls and boys. And what older child does not tingle with anticipative pleasure when reading of "The Night Before Christmas."

Though many of the observances of these customs grew from pagan origin today they are so infused with the spirit of good-will and peace on earth that the day with its merry festival typifying to the world a Saviour's love is eagerly looked forward to by old and young alike.

THE SHOFAR

"Praise Him with the blowing of the shofar, praise Him with the psaltry and the harp."

According to authority, this custom has been handed down from early ages, and it is not only the solitary ancient musical instrument actually preserved in the Mosaic ritual, but it is the oldest wind instrument known to be retained in use in the world.

The shofar is made from a ram's horn, straightened and flattened by heat, and its sacredness is explained from the fact that it was originally made from the horns of the ram caught by its horns in the thicket, which was used as an offering in place of Isaac, and investigation proves that there is little doubt that it has been used in the Mosaic service from the time it was established until the present time; history, however, relates that tribes dwelling near the sea used shells for the same purpose.

Instruments of percussion are said to be the oldest forms of musical instruments known, while the wind instruments are classed as

next, hence the horn of the Hebrew must be one of great antiquity; some authorities justifiably claim that it was used in prehistoric times. In all countries the mythological gods have been regarded as the inventors of music and musical instruments, and the science of mythology, in attempting to explain to us the phenomena of sound, has woven many beautiful stories. The Greeks attribute to Pan, the shepherd god, the discovery of the pipe; Heroditus tells us that Athone invented the flute, and the Egyptians that Mercury invented the lyre, but the antiquarian claims that bone and pipe were in existence before the reed, and points in affirmation to the time when no reeds grew and rocks were everywhere; and it is now generally conceded that this instrument was no doubt used in prehistoric times. The evolution of cornets and horns from animals' horns and conch-shells has been easily traced, and that various other nations, ancient and modern, have used animals' horns for wind instruments is shown by the collection being preserved by the National Museum of the United States.

Tradition has handed down from generation to generation the manner of sounding the shofar, and it is said that when the New

Year happened on the Sabbath the shofar was sounded in the sanctuary, but not out of it, and that children should not be prevented from sounding it, but to the contrary they should be taught to sound it.

The German and Polish Jews give many reasons in their liturgy why the shofar should be sounded, and one of the great Jewish scholars of the middle ages says God commanded the sounding of the shofar: "First, because this day is the beginning of creation on which God created the world and begun to reign over it; and, as it is customary at the coronation of kings to sound the trumpets and cornets to proclaim the commencement of their reign, we, in a like manner, publicly proclaim, by the sound of the cornet, that the Creator is our king. Second, as the New Year is the first of the ten penitential days we sound the cornet as a proclamation to admonish all to return and repent, which, if they do not, they can not plead ignorance, as having been fully informed. Third, to remind us of the law given at Mount Sinai. Fourth, to remind us of the prophets who are compared to watchmen blowing the trumpets as mentioned in Ezekiel 33:4. Fifth, to remind us of the destruction of the Holy Temple. Sixth, to re-

mind us of the binding of Isaac, who willingly submitted to the will of heaven. Seventh, that when we hear the sounding of the cornet we may by the dread thereof be induced to humble ourselves before the Supreme Being, for it is the nature of these wind instruments to produce dread. Eighth, to remind us of the great and awful day of judgment on which the trumpet is to be sounded. Ninth, to remind us to pray for the time when outcasts of Israel are to be gathered together. Tenth, to remind us of the resurrection of the dead and the firm belief thereof."

Although the shofar was so largely used in religious services it was none the less employed in the time of war, playing an important part in the demonstration before the walls of Jericho, there are said to be not less than nineteen passages of Scripture from the prophets where the shofar symbolizes war. It was the signal for going to battle, the announcement of victory and for the recall of troops, and Rawlinson tells us the troops, marched to its notes. It was also used in seasons of danger and distress as well as in funeral ceremonies.

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A TOAST

Here's to the pencil pushers:
Here's to the members of the press,
May their talents never grow less.
May the years prove ushers
Of only the good and the best,
And bring to them a well earned rest.

Here's to the advocates of peace;
Here's to the students of political science,
May the two form a strong alliance.
May they bring us surcease,
From all care and sorrow,
With a rainbow of hope for the morrow.

Here's to the cause of womankind;
Here's to the children of the oppressed
May all their lives be blest.
May they protection find
From the greed of the Nation
In better laws and arbitration.

Here's to Art and Letters;
Here's to the toiler and the weaver,
May they use the proper lever.
May they loose the fetters,
Unravel webs of delusion
With a just and happy conclusion.

Then, brim the goblet, quaff a toast,
To the moulders of public opinion!
To those who hold dominion.
To the editor—our boast!
Fill the bowl, away with gloom,
For hopes shall brighten days to come.

THE MESSAGE

There's a message in the rumbling stream;
  There's a message in the last dying rays;
There's a message in all God's ways,
  To a longing and trusting heart, it seems.

There's a glorious message to you and me;
  It tells of naught else above,
But of God and His infinite love,
  If we only have the wisdom to see.

It is written in the firmament on high;
  It is written in the babbling brook,
If we will only pause a moment and look,
  We can plainly read it as we draw nigh.

There's a message that is kind and true:
  A silent message in all contact,
If we only have the wisdom to extract,
  The thought that is meant for me and you.

As the last evening shadows darken;
  As the sun sinks low behind the clouds,
All Nature, in stentorian voice, loud,
  Compels the soul of me and you to harken.

God's message speaks through all space;
  With a loving thought compelling,
Us to hear what silence is telling
  As on through this life we madly race.

So let us cultivate the psychic ear;
  Let the message write itself upon our heart,
Before the good spirit shall depart,
  Let us show wisdom, listen and draw near.

It teaches a religion of love and beauty;
  For this is the purpose and plan,
To find the soul of every superman,
  Compelling him to do his duty.

To better the world in factory and mart;
  Because every effort great and small,
Is demanded of us, each and all,
  Therefore, read the message in every part.

FROM OUT THE GLOOM

A footstep fell upon the stair,
  Listening I knew that you were there.
Out of the gloom your voice reached me,
  At last I knew that you were free.

Freed from anchors and fettered chains;
  Freed from turmoil and daily strains.
Out into the mysterious,
  The spirit had fled, made joyous.

Out of the shadows on the stair,
  I knew you stood with welcome there,
Bidding me come to paradise.
  Out of silence your voice called thrice.

I long to come to your open arms,
  But, there intercedes earthly forms—
Some day my soul too shall be free,
And then I shall hasten to thee.

AN EASTER LILY

Easter Lily, with beauty rare,
  Shedding its fragrance everywhere—
A silent messenger, from above;
  Sent by a friend, with love.

Plucked fresh with the morning's dew,
  Sent with the wish of pleasure to strew—
With delicate fragrance fraught,
  Bringing a loving thought.

Thus, is balm poured on broken hearts,
  Bleeding and torn with poisoned darts.
God's best blessing to all mankind
  Is the true friends we find.

The days may be dark and dreary
  The soul tired, heavy-laden, weary,
But the golden chord of friendship
  Anchors a drifting ship.

"Gather wreaths from garden bowers,
  Tell the wish of thy heart in flowers",
For, as on my table they nod,
  They fix the thought on God.

GOD SENT YOU TO ME

I was tired of the world's strife;
  Tired and weary of my sad life
Wishing my soul might be free,
  When God sent you to me.

You came to me with outstretched hand;
  Came from out the mystery land
Came with blessings to strew,—
  Need of sympathy you knew.

The friendship of your bright smile,
  Lighted many a weary mile,
Your power to understand
  Made of Earth a fair land.

The poisoned darts no longer sting;
  The bluebirds are all on the wing.
All Nature's fair today,
  For God sent you my way.

EVENING SHADOWS

Vapors hang low,
Purple shadows glow,
Nature's paint brush,
In the evening's hush,
Has been used by the Master's hand
To give to every mortal man
A symphony in magic hues,
With its golds, emeralds, blues,
To stir to grander themes,
The longing heart of dreams.

(Written on crossing the Continental Divide one June evening.)

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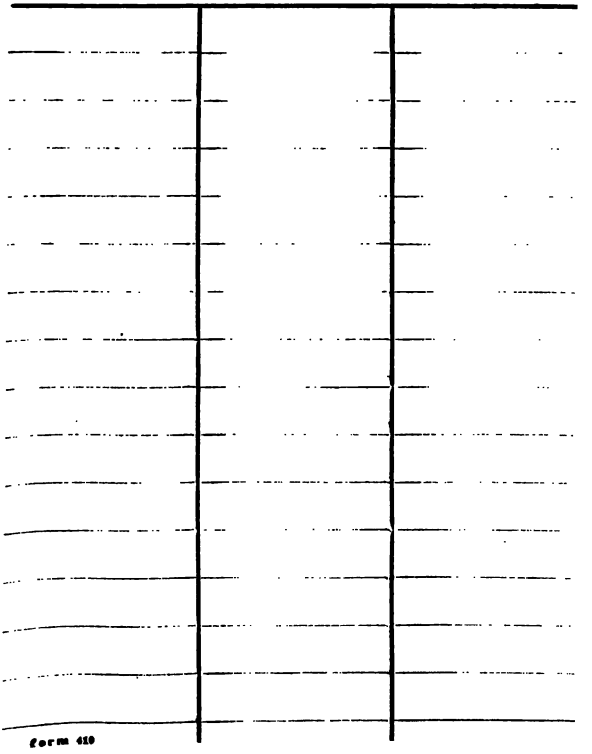

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